

Burnside Plantation  
Burnside P. O.  
Ascension Parish, Louisiana

HABS No. LA-26  
HABS  
LA.  
3-Bursi  
1-

PHOTOGRAPHS  
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA  
Louisiana

Historic American Buildings Survey  
Richard Koch, District Officer  
908 Queen & Crescent Building, New Orleans, La.

BURNSIDE PLANTATION

OWNER

Dr. George B. Crozat

ARCHITECT

BUILDER

General John S. Preston

PRESENT CONDITION

Good

NUMBER OF STORIES

Two with attic

MATERIALS OF CONSTRUCTION

Brick, cemented, Slate roof

OTHER EXISTING RECORDS

Court Records, Ascension Parish, Courthouse at  
Donaldsonville, La.

Records in the possession of Dr. George B. Crozat.

ADDITIONAL DATA

Today this plantation is called Burnside instead of by its original name, "The Houmas". Mr. John Burnside, from whom comes the present name, did not acquire the house until 1855, which was many years after its erection. The first name of the plantation was derived from the Houmas Indians who once occupied this region. It was in 1774 that these lands, some 11,920 acres, passed from the hands of the Redmen to those of the White. Since such a great number of Indian Tribes were cheated out of their lands by the early settlers, it is interesting to note that this transaction was actually a sale. It was made by Calapane, Chief of the Bayou Goula and Houmas Indians, to Maurice Conway and Alex. Latil on October 5, 1774. In the course of a few years, 1777, Conway, so

**DATA NOT COMPILED AND NOT GUARANTEED  
BY LIBRARY OF CONGRESS**

as to be protected in the White Courts as well as the Indian, obtained from Don Bernardo de Galvez, Governor ad interim and intendant in place of Unzaga, a complete patent or "Titulo in Formo" to this land. The exact extent of this acreage is clearly shown on a "Map of the Houmas Plantations" compiled by Mr. Frank H. Waddill, consulting Civil Engineer in 1931.

Legend has it that Chevalier de la Ville built the first house on the site of the present Burnside but to date there is no documentary evidence to prove this point. General Wade Hampton bought the property known as "The Houmas" from Daniel Clark on Feb. 25, 1811, and probably built a house on this land about 1820. From the estate at his death his daughter, Mrs. Caroline Hampton Preston, wife of General John S. Preston, acquired the property and it is undoubtedly to the Prestons that we owe the building as it stands today. They rebuilt the Plantation at some time during the early forties. The hexagonal Garconnières, which are typically French in feeling, remained unchanged while the dining-room doorway and the interior curving stair which were used in the earlier building were reused to great advantage. With the addition of the great white columns, the watch-tower and the formal lines of balusters crowning the roof, the house assumed a magnificence which it owes to that period of the Classic Revival. The lives of the planters of this era matched, if not exceeded, the impressiveness of their elaborate mansions.

The General and Mrs. John S. Preston kept, as well as "The Houmas" a town house in New Orleans, which was spacious enough to house a college, which it has done now for some years. Newcomb

College was for some time housed there in the old house which takes up the whole square bounded by Washington, 6th, Chestnut and Camp Streets. Today it is still, being used for the same purpose by the Baptist College of New Orleans.

In 1858 the Plantation was bought by John Burnside, a native of Belfast, Ireland <sup>WHO</sup> and in the space of a few years had amassed a fortune and was the owner of nine of the surrounding plantations. Twenty four years later, a business associate, Oliver Beirne, as residuary Legatee, inherited the Burnside Estate which he later sold to his daughter, Nancy Beirne, wife of Emile Van Ahlefeldt, on Jan. 21, 1886. At the death of Oliver Beirne the property reverted to his estate and was inherited by the Heirs and Legatees Miles, who later sold it to the Miles Planting and Manufacturing Company. In 1905 Dr. William Porcher Miles acquired it from this Company and later passed it on to his heirs, from whom it was purchased recently and is at present being restored by Dr. George B. Crozat.

Boyd Cruise,  
December 19, 1940.

Approved by Richard Koch Date Dec. 21, 1940  
Richard Koch, District Officer.

DATA NOT COMPILED AND NOT GUARANTEED  
BY LIBRARY OF CONGRESS